

CLAIMS

1. A method for providing local anesthesia or analgesia to a mammal which comprises topically applying a composition to said mammal containing an anesthetic or analgesic agent encapsulated within lipid vesicles.

2. The method of claim 1 in which the composition contains multilamellar lipid vesicles.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the anesthetic or analgesic agent is selected from the group consisting of benzocaine, xylocaine, ketocaine, methyl salicylate, trolamine salicylate, lidocaine, prilocaine, tetracaine, pramoxine and dibucaine.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the composition is topically applied in an amount of between about 0.005 to 0.5 g/cm² of surface to be anesthetized.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the lipid vesicles comprise unilamellar lipid vesicles.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the lipid vesicles are multivesicular.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said lipid vesicles are prepared using a phospholipid.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the phospholipid is selected from the group consisting of phosphatidylcholines, lysophosphatidylcholines, phosphatidylserines, phosphatidylethanolamines, and phosphatidylinositols.

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9. The method of claim ⁶ 8 wherein the phospholipid is provided in admixture with a modifying agent selected from the group consisting of cholesterol, stearylamine and tocopherols.

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10. The method of claim ⁷ 8 wherein the anesthetic or analgesic agent is selected from the group consisting of benzocaine, xylocaine, ketocaine, lidocaine, prilocaine, tetracaine and dibucaine.

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11. The method of claim ⁸ 10 wherein the composition contains said anesthetic or analgesic agent in an amount between about 0.3% and 5.0% by weight.

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12. A pharmaceutical composition comprising lipid vesicles having a topical anesthetic or analgesic agent selected from the group consisting of benzocaine, xylocaine, ketocaine, methyl salicylate, trolamine salicylate, lidocaine, prilocaine, tetracaine and pramoxine, encapsulated therein in an amount of between about 0.1 to 10% by wt. of said composition.

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13. The composition of claim ¹⁰ 12 wherein the lipid vesicles are multilamellar.

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14. The composition of claim ¹⁰ 12 wherein the lipid vesicles are unilamellar.

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15. The composition of claim ¹⁰ 12 wherein the lipid vesicles are multivesicular.

ADD ²
B 7

Claim 14

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